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SUBJECT: SYG BAN BRIEFS SECURITY COUNCIL ON OCTOBER 28
ATTACK IN KABUL

Classified By: Ambassador Susan Rice for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: During emergency consultations with Security Council members, Secretary-General Ban addressed the October 28 attack in Kabul which killed five and injured nine UN staff, and discussed the broader implications of the incident on the near-term safety and security of UN staff in Afghanistan. Ban gave a brief overview of the guesthouse attack, discussed the possibility of future attacks on UN staff, provided ideas on how to improve the security conditions for UN staff and asked for support and assistance to do so from Member States and ISAF. In the first quarter of his briefing Ban noted that during the attack the UN sought assistance from Afghan security forces and ISAF, which took more than an hour to arrive. Following Ban's briefing, all Council members made comments unanimously condemning the attack, providing condolences, and assuring continued support to the UN in Afghanistan. End summary.

¶2. (C) On October 29, Secretary-General Ban called for emergency, same-day consultations with Security Council members in connection with the security situation in Afghanistan. SYG Ban took this opportunity to address Council members about the October 28 attack in Kabul which killed five and injured nine UN staff. Ban acknowledged that were it not for the brave actions of the UN DSS officials who were armed only with pistols, the attackers armed with suicide vests, automatic weapons and grenades could have done far more damage. (Note: The one UN DSS agent killed was an American citizen. End note.) Ban stated that during the attack the UN sought assistance from Afghan security forces and ISAF, which took more than an hour to arrive, and noted that the UN is still "sorting out the facts" in regards to this "delay."

¶3. (C) Ban confirmed that the UN will not abandon its mission in Afghanistan as a result of the attack; however, he is personally reviewing a number of near-term actions to improve security conditions for UN staff, since UN DSS has told the SYG that the question is "not if, but when" the next attack on UN staff or facilities will occur. Ban has convened a group of UN agency heads to discuss possible actions to improve security for UN staff. These discussions are on-going and include sending non-essential staff on annual leave, consolidation of the more than 93 Kabul-based UN housing and office locations, and use of emergency discretionary funds for safety and security improvements to be made immediately. Concrete security improvements could potentially include: an increase of UN guard units in country, ISAF assistance - with a special emphasis outside of Kabul where security is "markedly insufficient", and additional Afghan government security support. Ban noted that in a call earlier today, President Karzai pledged additional Afghan security support.

¶4. (C) Ban's next steps include calling a UN town hall meeting for staff and briefing the General Assembly on

October 30. Ban reminded Council members that while UNAMA has received full political support, financial and logistical support has been lacking from some members. In his briefing to the General Assembly, he will aim to shore up further needed financial support for security. Additionally, Ban stated he is considering sending a senior management officer to Kabul to implement the necessary immediate, additional security measures. (Note: Ban also plans to travel to Kabul on November 2, but did not mention this to the Council. End note.)

15. (C) Following Ban's briefing, all Council members unanimously condemned the attack, provided condolences, and assured continued support to UN efforts through the elections and beyond. All welcomed the SYG's request for immediate additional support related to security, although no Members made any firm commitments. Mexico suggested that needed financial resources to increase the safety and security for UN staff in Afghanistan should come from re-allocation of funds rather than new funding requests. Multiple members, including Austria, China, Croatia, Japan, Libya and Russia, highlighted the need for increased ISAF support in protecting UN staff and facilities. Japan reminded Council members of their shared responsibility on this topic given the Council's authorization of UNAMA. Related, France noted the need to look at this security incident and the broader security situation for the UN in Afghanistan during the next UNAMA mandate extension. France also suggested that UNAMA's 2010 plans to further expand in the regions may be compromised given the deteriorating security situation. At the conclusion of the briefing, following the suggestion of Russia, Council members came to consensus on a presidential

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statement (PRST) condemning the terrorist attack and providing strong support for the SYG, SRSG and all United Nations personnel.

Rice